

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1 - 10 (canceled)

11. (currently amended) A holding ring for holding an optical element for dip treatment thereof, the ring comprising a hoop for draining and encircling ~~the~~ a peripheral edge of the optical element, thereby exerting continuous linear contact with said peripheral edge, said hoop forming an arc over more than 180° and being provided at each of its two ends with an outwardly-directed drip tab pointing away from the optical element.

12. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The ring according to claim 11, in which the hoop presents an inside face in contact with the peripheral edge of the optical element, ~~which said~~ inside face is longitudinally continuous ~~to the second order~~ and presents no sharp edge extending across it.

13. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The ring according to claim 12, in which each said drip tab presents an inside face extending

the inside face of the hoop with longitudinal continuity ~~to the second order~~ without any sharp edge extending across it.

14. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The ring according to claim 11, in which the hoop forms an arc lying in the range 250° to 280°.

15. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The ring according to claim 14, in which the ring forms an arc of 250° to within 10%.

16. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The ring according to claim 11, in which the hoop is elastically flexible.

17. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The ring according to claim 11, in which the free ends of the drip tabs are chamfered.

18. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The ring according to claim 11, in which the hoop is constituted by a section member of section that presents an inside for contacting the optical element, an outside, and two lateral sides, at least one of the inside and the outside of the section of the hoop connecting to the lateral sides via sharp angles.

19. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The ring according to claim 18, in which at least one of the inside and the outside of the

section of the hoop ~~has~~ is concave, thereby forming a setback  
~~formed~~ therein.

20. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The ring according to claim  
11, in which the encircling arc presents an outside face  
possessing two diametrically opposite striated holding portions.